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JOHANN WOLFGANG GOETHE UNIVERSITÄT FRANKFURT AM MAIN

"What's on the menu at the soup kitchen?"

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Presented by:

Simon Beale,

Vice President, International Sales, Marketing & Business Development

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Introduction

- In an increasingly complex world of learned information delivery and discovery – can the "free lunch" worries of the commercial publishing community possibly come true?

- Although Open Access has not (yet) created the "scorched earth" effect many were predicting – it is slowly and inevitably gaining momentum.

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Introduction

- Meanwhile, Google’s broad access to top-level information does appear to be "good enough" for many in their search for content.

- This presentation looks to identify the trends and differentiators in information quality and access that are driving what will be a radically different future information landscape.

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Stats, Sound bytes & the wider debate……

- Open Access v. Total Access
- USA – core scientific market – estimated at $7-11 billion (OECD)
- STM - 2000 Publishers; 1.2m articles each yr; 16,000 journals
- 75% scholarly journals now online (OECD)
- Estimated 30% of all journal publishing revenues come from Online, 40% of these in the Science and Healthcare sector.
- Reed Elsevier prediction (Crispin Davis, CEO)
  - 2008 – RE online revenues will surpass print
  - 2015 – “RE will be almost entirely an online business”
- A plethora of evolving business and publication models – “Big Deal” v. “Little Deal”; Open Access; Open Access Archives; Delayed Open Access; Pre / Post prints; IR’s; Alternative peer review.
- “Good is good enough” v. “better is better still”
  - Aggregation v. Stand alone delivery
  - General Search engine v. specialist retrieval system
- The “extended” (e) journal – newswires, podcasts, AV, Blogs.

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Stats, Sound bytes & the wider debate……

- “The value of knowledge and the return on the public investment in research depends, in part, upon wide distribution and ready access”.

- “The Internet – and pressure from funding agencies, who are questioning why commercial publishers are making money from government funded research by restricting access to it – is making free access to scientific results a reality”

“The Paperless Library” September 22nd, 2005
www.economist.com/science/story_ID=4423646

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If you can’t stand the heat…

- Not “scorched earth” but still “hotting up”…..
- Two major trends (but not the only ones)
  - Open Access
  - Google
- How should commercial Publishers react?
  - Fight against the tide with traditional business models or embrace new business opportunities thrown up by these external influences?

Content and the value proposition

- "People will not pay for quality of information but they will pay for quality of source“

  Bill Grueskin, Managing Editor of the Wall Street Journal Online

- Branding and evidence of quality and reliability of quality over a long term basis will become increasingly important differentiators.

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Open Access – today's "Special" but tomorrow's "main course"?...

- We see an industry in growth and flux – with other models now appearing on the menu
- First and foremost Open Access (slow to grow but not going away)
  - A few flavours of the same dish
    - From author pays to hybrid, delayed, sponsored access (e.g. Glaxo) & governmental and institutional funding.
    - Many moving away from pure author pays to heavier weighting on customer pays – (are we turning full circle here?).
- Now various bodies with vested interest in making OA work
- Central premise - ultimately the taxpayer pays for research that is currently published in commercial journals.
- How can – or should – the commercial Publisher react?

ALPSP OA Research Findings

- Full OA journals received less than 10% of the article submissions received by other types of journals
- Both circulation and usage of other types of journals were significantly higher than for Full OA journals.
- Biggest source of financial support for OA journals was display advertising income.
- Financial health of Full OA journals is comparatively weak; 41% ran at a loss.

Google….all you can eat (at once!)

- Information Providers and Aggregators - how to position and differentiate
- Clearly popular and we underestimate them at our peril….but how stable or sustainable is the model?
  - Just “scanning” is still breaking copyright.
  - Do we know the management and do they know our industry? Does that matter?
  - What happens if the ads don’t make enough money?
  - What happens if the market shifts / loses interest?
  - What if it becomes a “money pit”?
  - What happens to Google’s digitised assets if they go bust (it’s been know to happen!)
- Capitalism at its best…..however…..

Publishers now seen as a liability in content preservation

- The Digital Library Foundation (DLF) claims urgent action is required by the academic community in order to preserve electronic scholarly journals.

Where are we now?....

- Open Access
  - Slow growth, confusion, factions and fragmentation – but still on the increase.
- Google
  - Number of drawbacks; one size fits all; community “backlash”; a big job that might not prove to be as financially attractive in future years..

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…..and where's all this heading?

- Broadly speaking the battle lines have been drawn between the "corporate" publishing bodies and the Academic community
- Easy to cry "foul".
- But innovation, evolution and adaptation are an inevitability – Darwin 101.
- And mostly in life "you get what you pay for".
- There is a lucrative position in the "middle ground".

And so to the kitchen….

- No food for free in a quality restaurant
  - Usually happy to pay for selection, preparation, speed and expertise of delivery.
- Free Lunch at the Soup Kitchen
  - filling – but no choice, a long wait, and no “Silver Service”.
- Diversification & specialisation are fundamental forces
  - Publishers need to develop services ranging from fast food to the Waldorf (but better than broth).
  - Some customers will choose a “good enough” meal – some will be willing to pay for a more satisfactory experience.
  - Business reality will drive the commercial necessity for value proposition development that addresses enough diverse needs to stay commercially viable.

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So what’s on *our* menu?...

- We can clearly differentiate on a number of general levels;
  - Fast delivery of products to market.
  - A long term track record of delivering quality products.
  - Market specialists – we are close to market; we listen to it; we are advised by it; we “create profit by delivering value”.
  - Needs based “solutions”.
  - Specific service elements addressing the wide range of information and research needs of a wider range of user types

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Self Service to A la Carte

- Enhancing / expanding quality, coverage & management of their A&I, metadata, controlled vocabularies etc. Maybe offering expert indexing and editorial skills to partners and customers?
- Exploring A&I development in new subject areas and market sectors
- Expanding the coverage and quality of the data they host or point to – inc. cross-format integration & forward compatibility.
- New content availability, A&I & pointing (NPC, Open Access, IRs)
- Provision of content and technical development capabilities

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Self Service to A la Carte

- Enhancing and expanding their linking technologies & partnerships
- Reviewing publishing capabilities to help fill market gaps
- Improved Technology and broadening delivery platforms
- Flexible and diverse pricing models & bespoke market offerings
- Closer partnerships with the customers themselves
- Understanding the developing presence & needs of the NetGen User



And in closing…..

- A balanced view is recommended
- An industry in flux – but still clear ongoing value in commercial (evolving) publishing models
- All parties still need sustainable business models and long term commercial viability to ensure ongoing health and development of learned information
- Doesn’t stop alternative methods and outputs being part of the total solution
- But not simple or easy…….
- ……….even soup kitchens need cooks!

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"It is not the strongest of the species that survive, nor the most intelligent, but the most responsive to change"

(The Complete Works of Charles-Darwin)